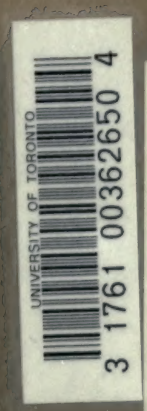

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Cameos of playwrights &
players

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CAMEOS

BY

J. T. GREIN.

WITH OPEN LETTER FROM GERALD DU MAURIER.

Theatre
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CAMEOS

OF

PLAYWRIGHTS & PLAYERS,

1914—1921,

BY

J. T. GREIN,

WITH OPEN LETTER FROM GERALD DU MAURIER.

"*No levell'd malice*
Infects one comma in the course I hold."
—SHAKESPEARE.

Published for the Actors' Orphanage by the Author at
24, LAUNCESTON PLACE, KENSINGTON, W.8, or 27, MINCING LANE,
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I dedicate this booklet to the Actors' Orphanage, so that the tribute to the Dead may prove beneficial to the young generation. I hope, therefore, that many friends of the Drama will purchase these Silhouettes, which I wrote to keep green the memory of those who have deserved well of that great cause of ours—Our Theatre.

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WYNDHAM'S THEATRE,
LONDON,
June 13th, 1921.

Dear Mr. Grein,

As you have been so generous as to devote the proceeds of the sale of your little volume "Cameos" to the Actors' Orphanage, the least I can do as its President is to thank you for your great kindness, and wish it every success and "bon voyage." I remember years ago on the first night of a production, for which I was entirely responsible (it took place on a Saturday), a friend of mine came round and said "J. T. Grein is in the front row, I wonder what he thinks of it?" I replied "I neither know nor care"! This being the case, I wonder why I snatched the "Sunday Times" from the servant's hands the first thing in the morning, and tore it open to see what you had written. After all, what a fool one would be, if one didn't listen very earnestly to the considered opinion of a man who has devoted his life to the theatre in the way that you have done. And now, when so many of your friends and mine are no longer with us, it must surely be interesting to many who treat you as a sort of oracle in matters theatrical, to listen to what you have to say about them and their art.

Your pen, at any rate, is always steeped in enthusiasm, and what you say, you mean, and stick to, and sign your name above for all the world to see. In the present case, your signature is at the foot of what I trust will be a handsome cheque in aid of the sons and daughters of those whose art you have already done so much to foster and encourage.

Yours sincerely,
GERALD du MAURIER.

J. T. GREIN, Esq.

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SIR GEORGE ALEXANDER.

Of him, this great and good man, I can speak in heartfelt appreciation, for the years had knitted close friendship between us. Only ten days ago I saw him, never to see him again, a noble figure with the shadow of the beyond hovering over his wan countenance. And, oh, the irony of it. He wanted me to talk about London life and about a little book of mine of tributes to actors and writers who have left us ; he promised to launch it for the benefit of the Actors' Orphanage with a preface from his pen, and now he is the one who opens the pageant of death with a memoir of himself !

He was great perhaps even more as a man than as an actor. He had sipped the bitter cup and sparkling bowl of glory ; he understood life, he embraced its fulness ; he loved humanity. His theatre was an example to the dramatic world. Its air was distinguished, its atmosphere warm with sympathy, for he was good, and those around him—Helmsley, his trusted henchmen, Vivian Reynolds, Horne, Vincent—cherished the " chief " as a personal friend.

His claim to a great place in the history of our stage was his devotion to British art. Pinero, Jones, Carton, Fagan, Grundy, McCarthy, Parker, Stephen Phillips, Shakespeare—they were his cult. Now and again he admitted a foreign playwright, but his theatre was all for England.

Given the right part, he was an actor of great individuality, always distinguished, always, in mien and demeanour, the perfect man of the world. His Orlando was unforgettable, his Tanqueray no less so, his Jewish doctor in " Belladonna " as fine a specimen of character-acting as the world could produce.

With him another pillar of our theatre is wrenched away—one of those figures of a generation that mark an epoch. But his tradition will continue to live side by side with his memory. For he deserved well of his art and his country.

STANLEY HOUGHTON.

" It heralds the movement of the future. It is inevitable that one day the sexual position of the woman will become as acute a question as that of her political rights. Therefore it is well that the way should be paved, and such a play as ' Hindle Wakes ' is of greater value, because it forces the heart to give earnest thought to that which in our community is always suppressed under the shield of tradition, convention, and even education."

Thus I referred to the message and the importance of " Hindle Wakes "—that play of Stanley Houghton's in which his memory will survive. He did other good work ; he wrote " The Younger Generation," in which he showed how well he knew his little Lancashire corner of the Empire, how the claims of emancipation penetrated into the middle-class. I fear that not all his countrymen thanked him for his candour, but the book or play that shows us inner life of the provinces has value as a human document.

Success came to Houghton swiftly and fatally. He, like that other creative genius departed in his prime, Pelissier, forgot that excellence in miniature painting does not necessarily promise success on broader canvas. When Stanley Houghton came to live in London and tried to widen his sphere of observation, his work failed. His political play written for Mr. Bourchier contained one good act, and that was a repetition of fragments from " Hindle Wakes " and " The Younger Generation." His " Perfect Cure " lived for five nights at the Apollo Theatre and then was suddenly extinguished. It was worthy of a better fate ; whatever criticism may have been, a five nights' run was scarcely a fair chance. Stanley Houghton felt that ; it broke his heart ; it filled his sensitive mind with fear of London ; he fled—and for a time disappointment blighted his creative power. Then physical ailment attacked his young life ; he was swept away in the flower of promise. And the drama of England mourns his loss as if a pro-Consul had gone from the midst of conquest and fertile colonisation.

SYDNEY GRUNDY.

Our R. C. Carton, the dramatist of the chiselled dialogue and delicate satire, has drawn a life-sized picture of his colleague in " Lorrimer Sabiston, dramatist," playwright, utilitarian, apostle of the well-named play. The play was caviare to the public at the St. James's—our public runs after actors and cares little for the " what's his name " who writes plays—but those who know the theatrical cuisine saw in the satire of the man the reincarnation of a period.

Apostle of the well-made play. That was his rise, his zenith, his eclipse. There was a time when our theatre-bills named Grundy, Grundy all the way. He was after Palgrave Simpson—and a long way above him—the master adaptor from the French. Scribe, Sardou, Augier, others now forgotten, Labiche, whose re-created " A Pair of Spectacles " was a masterpiece of adaptation and a pet-child of the London public ; every Frenchman of the 'eighties found in Grundy his English interpreter. He was also prolific as an original writer. He rose to fame with his " Glass of Fashion," a comedy which might well be revived in the fashion of the period ; he wrote the one play in which Mrs. Langtry raised great hopes and indicated possibilities—" The Degenerates " ; he fought the Press—he was always fighting something or somebody—in " An Old Jew," a work of interest, but in advance of its time ; he was among the first to tackle the marriage question as it exists in England, in " Slaves of the Ring." His material was deft, academic, calculated. It is said of him that he manœuvred his every scene that mattered on a little marionette-theatre in his study, and before that made a draught-board of his players and characters. An artistic soul, with an eye to the main chance, he seldom " let himself go." His dialogue was direct, of the theatre, clear but rarely brilliant. He was a man of *métier*, not of vocation. A journalist in fact, who chose the stage as his arena. For his strong personality needed the outlet of bucolic force. When the Bar disappointed

him and the theatre, in later years, followed newer men, he took to pen and pamphlet. He had had a thousand duels—with Clement Scott, with Archer, with everybody who dared attack the holy methods of the 'eighties. Almost his last word was an impugnment of Bernard Shaw—vitriolic, clever, overshooting the mark, but as flamboyant as a rocket. It was the swan's song of a disappointed man—as Shaw says somewhere in "Fanny's First Play," "he was left behind"—hence these tears. Yet he was a fine fellow and as straight as a die, as candid as a real friend, more gifted than many who left more enduring work. With him a personality disappears from the scene and thinking over his record we proffer gratitude to his memory for having been a beacon in the days when the English stage was darkest among its rivals.

HAROLD CHAPIN.

England gave him a beloved wife, a child and fame; and he, the generous, heroic American, at twenty-nine offered to England his life in exchange for her bounties. It is a mournful, yet a glorious loss. He was not only an artist, he was a man in the noblest acceptance of the word.

His rise had been almost phenomenal; quite young he made his mark as an actor and producer, then the little theatre that enlivens the Sunday—the Play-Actors—revealed him as a new dramatist and one who had something to say. What Pett Ridge and other students of the people wrote down in books young Chapin plasticised it on the stage. His little plays, such as "Augustus in Search of a Father," "The Dumb and the Blind," were wonderful thumbnails of the nether-world of the great city. Pictures of pain they often were and pleas for pity. It was Chapin's lovable quality that he combined the humorist with the man of feeling. The latter was appreciated by the students and the patrons of provincial repertory theatres—in Glasgow and Manchester his name was often on the programme—but it was Chapin the merry, discovered by Miss Marie Tempest, who made his name in London.

He became a man that mattered on the 5th of September, 1912, when our greatest comedienne gave him the great chance in "Art and Opportunity." "Elaine" spread the author's fame in many lands, and just before he joined the Army he had put the finishing touch to "The Right Measure"—a high comedy, as he called it, that would show us yet another Chapin, one who sees life steadily and whole. Alas, that what he hoped to be a new promise was fated to become a legacy!

HUBERT HENRY DAVIES.

I met him some fifteen months ago while sauntering on the Embankment between Blackfriars and Charing Cross. We were but casual acquaintances, both bashful, as things happen between those who criticise and those who are criticised. Yet on that day, drawn more closely to one another by the war-cloud, he said, as I asked him what he was writing, " Somehow my imagination is at a standstill. No one can tell what the play should be. The war has changed the whole aspect of things."

We shook hands and parted ways, but the fleeting conversation left me pondering. I remembered his successful beginning in " Mrs. Gorringe's Necklace " ; I remembered his " Cousin Kate," with a second act of duologue so delightful, so delicious, that we all felt the bliss of the seventh heaven ; I remembered his " Mollusc," masterpiece of a dainty quartette of players, so simple, so satirical, so true of home-lives " en miniature " ; I remembered other plays of his, less valuable yet always full of the flower and honey of romance, slightly acidulated by an acute sense of humour.

Above all, I remembered " Outcast," that forceful, emotional plea for the Woman by the Wayside, who might have been a fruitful vine but for the turpitude of the first vintner.

On " Outcast " alone, less dexterous than the " Mollusc," less hail-fellow-well-met than " Cousin Kate," I could have built great hopes on H. H. Davies' lasting fame. But that strange meeting on the Embankment, which somehow haunted me whenever I passed the same spot at Temple Gardens entrance, marked a milestone in my memory. I felt as if I had said good-bye to a gentle soul adrift in the whirlpool of unfathomable turmoil.

" Somehow my imagination is at a standstill." Was this tragic sentence the foreboding of his untimely departure ?

BASIL HOOD.

As I write in this Devonian little eldorado of Lynmouth—a spot so beautiful that I often regret that I did not listen to the voice of the Great Western Railway, " See your own country first," and went abroad like everybody else—as I write this valediction to a poetic soul, I see in the mountain scenery beyond my window a wondrous reincarnation of an Andersen Fairy Tale. I see in the tiny village, houses garlanded by evergreen cliffs, bounded by a gentle sea; " Ib., "Andersen's little hero, vivified by Martin Harvey, poetised by Basil Hood, nursing and tending a little child. I hear, like an echo of infinite altruism, little Ib's simple words, charged with a world of feeling," and for little Christina." To me an everlasting melody and a psalmic chord.

In transcribing " Ib and little Christina " for the theatre, Basil Hood revealed all that was serene, tender, artistic, above all, human in him. It is the pearl in a quaint chain of stones, precious or merely lustrous.

For Basil Hood was a man of versatility and therefore in great demand. When Gilbert and Sullivan agreed to differ, the remaining active partner sought Basil Hood, and if in the " Rose of Persia " and the " Emerald Isle " there was more romance than topsy-turveydom, it inspired Sir Arthur to some of his most charming music. Edward German, he of the yet incomplete great expectations, found in Basil Hood the right man to sketch in pictures and in word that merriest of " Merrie England," whose joyful piper he became.

Meanwhile Basil Hood tried his hand at comedy, and in " Sweet and Twenty " he hit off both the spirit of the times and the personality of the actress. The public, surfeited by problem plays in these days, was ready for reaction, and in " Sweet and Twenty "—as symbolised by Miss Ellaline Terriss, and later for many years by charming Mabel Love—made centuries at the Vaudeville.

At length, Basil Hood became the trusted librettist-in-chief of Mr. George Edwardes. It was in a way a rise—for Edwardes knew the value of the man—and in another sense an obstacle in the career of Basil Hood. He was now no longer a free agent; he was akin to an M.P. elected for Party purposes, he had to do as he was bid. Yet whatever was his task—whether it was happy-go-lucky musical comedy or feeble Viennese libretto—he did his best to raise the standard by polished dealogue and that nimble wit all his own.

His last work was " Young England," an effort to rouse the nation by martial strains and a joyful page of history. It was, as far as the book was concerned, not as effective as the subject warranted. We felt strain in jest and elaboration. We did not know then what we know now; that this gallant officer, who had exchanged the sword for the pen, had in the hour of his country's stress and clamour, devoted his frail middle-age to war-work, and toiling with such enthusiasm, such disregard of self, that he died a soldier at his post.

HERBERT TREE.

An Appreciation.

His was the ideal departure, no suffering, no agony, no leave-taking, yet to the world that cherished, to the friends that loved him, it was as if, in awful suddenness, a vital force had become a shadow of memory.

For Sir Herbert was not merely the leader of his profession acknowledged by the public, he was an institution in our midst. He loved to voice his opinion on many questions, and he was listened to with an attentive smile, for, devoted to epigram, he had the talent of coining the right phrase with an unfailing sense of humour. Had he not elected to be a king among actors, he would have become a prince among men of letters. As it is, some of his written pages are likely to be remembered, some of his anecdotes will remain the fringe of his fame.

Herbert Tree was an actor of genius, great in some parts. He was a great producer with inspirations of genius. He had the eye for the picturesque and for colour, his mind embraced all that was grand and powerful of projection.

The crowd applauded him as a tragedian in the sense they understood the word. Hence the worship of his Svengali—his most flamboyant, but by no means his most artistic, creation. Really he was a born comedian, and never was he so happy as when he could pepper the audience with clever repartee as if hurtled by machine-gun. Of all his creations his Falstaff was perhaps the most complete, and most humorous, as his "Richard II." was his most inwardly pathetic. His Cardinal Wolsey in "Henry VIII," lives in memory as a figure of Velasquian grandeur, his "Macbeth" as a profound and subtle study of criminology, his Hamlet, much criticised, as the "Intellectual Hamlet" of our time.

Sir Herbert as a manager, has been a helpmate to many English playwrights, although, curiously enough, neither Pinero nor Barrie ever

graced his boards, but most of all has he worked at the revivalism of Shakespeare. What Sir Frank Benson has done for the provinces, Sir Herbert, in Irving's wake, yet on grander and more persistent scale, has achieved in London. Shakespearean productions at His Majesty's once and for all belied the saying that the bard "spelt ruin;" ; the Festival in April was, until the war broke out, London's annual worship of the national poet.

Much has been said and written for and against Tree's method of producing Shakespeare, and a main stricture was that the glamour of the spectacle overhelmed the splendour of the word. It is not the hour to analyse the method, but the popularity of Shakespeare at His Majesty's is proof of Tree's wonderful understanding of men. He knew that the London crowd could not be conquered through its intellect alone, so he conquered it through the eye and the heart in displays festive and fairy-like, attuned to acting vibrating with enthusiasm, voice and motion.

In life, Tree was a grand seigneur with a golden heart and a childlike mind. He understood the limelight, and basked in its sunshine ; he understood also that in this century the right cult of " I am—I," was the way to impress the multitude. Wherefore he was ever *en vedette* and regaled with princely liberality. But deep down in his heart he was the simplest of men, and the word of approval of a super in the wings made him happier than paeans of praise in newspaper columns. It is the personality even more than the artist that made Tree a man of moment ; yet as an artist his work was of such magnitude that in near and happier days to come, the nation should hallow his memory by acquiring His Majesty's Theatre as Shakespeare's shrine of worship in the capital of the English-speaking world.

THE LAURENCE IRVINGS.

The infinite tragedy of it! There they were, homeward bound, crowned with laurels of the Dominion. He steadfastly rising on the steep gradient, that leads to greatness. She a ripening talent, the helpmate and counsellor of her husband. We bemourn their loss as friends; we bemourn them even more as a lost young hope of our drama. Laurence Irving, like his brother, was an image of his father, and being of the younger generation he outrivalled his father in broadness of view. When in 1897, he gave us "Peter the Great" we felt that immaturity was overshadowed by a creative mind. Left in leisure to playwriting, Laurence Irving was destined to add to the history of the drama. A Russian play of his and his own adaptation of "The Lily" were indicative of inventiveness and instinct. But above all he was an actor. And as an actor he stood prominent among the young generation. He has had his time of laborious toil in the provinces, but when he brought "The Lily" to town we felt that here was a man of great possibilities. Then came "The Pretenders," and those who understood Ibsen said at once, "There are eccentricities and rough edges, but he lives in the spirit of the character." After that the triumph of his life, "Typhoon," of which I ventured to say Mr. Laurence Irving, who is credited with the able adaptation of Mr. Lengyel's remarkable work, has in many respects deviated from the original. That is no concern of ours, since, save some unnecessary political interjections, there is no trace of tinkering. The last act is certainly a great improvement. But what is more important is the magnificent interpretation of Takeramo by the actor-author. His was a task, for there were real Japanese in the cast, but there was no obvious difference. In its calmness of speech, its suppressed force, unchained but twice on points where all humanity would be aflame, in its gentleness of manner, with shyness in the undercurrent, Mr. Irving's portraiture was masterly. It was almost uncanny in its transformation of race."

And now in the midst of that fulness of joyful creation the stroke of fate; it is too painful to think of. But the heart goes out to his brother Henry, the sole survivor of the illustrious name, destined to still greater honour at his hands.

H. B. IRVING.

Of Henry Irving's two sons, Laurence was a genius, with all the waywardness attached to the word, and Henry a great talent.

In him, too, there was the higher, the indefinable gift, but it was only appreciated by those who knew him more intimately in his studies of criminology. To hear Harry analyse a murder case was akin to listening to a great judge's summing up. He was an actor by choice, by heritance, by study ; by intuition he was a great advocate, not in the sense of the letter of the law, but in his fathoming and understanding of human nature. His book on " Judge Jeffreys "—a leading magistrate of the Metropolis said it on Saturday, the day when we learned his sad and premature departure—is a work for all time.

He might have been, indeed, had he lived, I think he would have become a great actor, but somehow in his case, as is so often the fate of sons of great fathers, he was overshadowed by the record and the precept of the immortal Irving. People would compare and the son, being in many ways a replica of the father, there always clung some difference as between the original and facsimile. Nor was it wise of his entourage to let him step into dead men's shoes, which fitted the father to perfection but were only a makeshift when worn by the son.

In " The Bells," in " Waterloo," in " Dr. Jekyll," it was patent that Mahomet was greater than his prophet.

It was on his own ground that we admired H. B. Irving ; after inauspicious beginnings, notably in " Dick Sheridan," by Buchanan, in which he was well-nigh a hopeless amateur, he suddenly made a giant's stride. His first essay of " Hamlet," entirely untrammelled by memories of his father, established an actor to be reckoned with. His was a profound, a searching, a studied Hamlet. " The philosophical Hamlet " as I ventured to call him at the time. When thirteen years later, he re-created the character, we were moved to speak of greatness. Had he proceeded

on the path of excelsior, he would have reached the pinnacle. But he, like so many on our stage, who would attempt the highest, were it not for the fight for life, had to commingle the practical with the ideal. Except when he worked for others, and added to his fame in " Letty " and in " The Admirable Crichton," he had to seek plays which would replenish his exchequer. Thus plays were written for him and around him, and often the material was not worthy of its wearer.

Latterly, he cut new ground in grafting on the stage the things he cherished in life—the supernatural, the mysterious, and the criminal aspect. And if we, as the French, had had authors to imagine such work beyond the meretricious and the obvious, he would have created lasting monuments instead of ephemeral sensations.

Still, by his descent, his dowry, his personality, his distinction, his goodness as a man and a leader, he will have his place in the history of our stage as one upon whose shoulders fell his father's mantle and who carried it with the dignity becoming a great succession.

LEWIS WALLER.

He was the greatest romantic actor of the English-speaking world, perhaps of our time. His life-work covers the whole domain of the drama, from the classics of the Greek to Ibsen's " Ghosts " and " Master-builder." But in our memory he will dwell supreme as Brutus, Hotspur, Henry V., d'Artagnan, Beaucaire. He was born to wear the costume, not the coat. Hence his immense popularity among the " gods," the young, and, above all, among women. For he appealed to the imagination.

In ordinary life a man of medium stature, he grew in costume or in hose and doublet to be a giant. And his voice, rich in organ tones, had the electrifying power of a clarion. His was the real *Panache* of Cyrano—a part which, alas, he was never allowed to play ; his was the dominating personality that stood upon the stage as a Nelson on his column ; his was the atmosphere that in the girlish heart realized the hero of dreams, and to riper mind conveyed the incarnation of manliness, will-power, strength. His art was rhetorical in the finest sense of the word, but oratory in him was not a thing learned, it was the leaping flame-burst from the fire within. Lewis Waller carried his hearers away because he charged his words with conviction, and, as he spoke, the gesture became wedded to the volume of the word. In his delivery glowed such fervour that the harangue of Henry V. roused unspeakable enthusiasm fraught with pride and patriotism ; that d'Artagnan revived the pristine aspirations of adolescence to gird the loins and do deeds of valour ; that in lesser work the commonplace became draped in the toga of portentous utterance.

In lighter vein he was the beau ideal of a squire of dames. In how many hearts has Beaucaire not quickened the palpitations to a roll of drums ; how many men have not slightly envied him for the grace of his manner and the eloquence of his smile ?

It was a common saying that Lewis Waller was not an intellectual actor. That was mere rumination of gossip-mongers. Was he not

classic *and* heroic as Hippolytus? Was he not an Othello of unwonted realism, a Moor that towered above the people? Has he not played Oswald in "Ghosts" *before* we had an Ibsen tradition that moved us to our innermost soul? Were not his Masterbuilder, his Rosmer, his Lovborg in the 'nineties—three immense parts learned in three weeks—a unique achievement of subtlety and depth? True, on the crest of his latter-day popularity he was tempted to produce many shallow plays of mere pictorial value; it was his penalty to fame, and in the end he paid for it by exile to America. But the States knew his worth and widened his scope. Yonder, too, he became the idol of the playgoing world, and he came home to us encouraged, rejuvenated and full of plans for great things to come. His fate that he was called away in the early autumn of a glorious career is our sadness, for he, simplest, kindest of men was as well-beloved as he was admired. And through theatreland runs the wail, "A king is dead—a throne must bide its time in emptiness."

FANNY BROUGH.

Sometimes a comparison is the aptest of all illustrations. As I write of Fanny Brough I cannot help thinking of that famous French actress, who is a refugee amongst us, Eve Lavallière. What she was to Paris, Fanny Brough was to London—the grand " gamine "—I use the word in its transcribed sense—typical of her native city.

Fanny had the assurance, the intonation, the healthy laugh, the humorous smile, of the real Londoner. When she appeared on the stage —whether it was in Drury Lane melodrama, the everlasting widow toying with the comic man, or in French farce—a breeze ran bracily through the audience. With one look, by her very gait, slightly masculine, as if she meant to put her foot down, the dullest play shone in illumination. She was the " old-stager " who knew every trick of the trade, and could calculate the effect of a funny line as precisely as a marksman his shot. Hers was the policy of hustle the action ; fling out the word ; make the public sit up ; never flag ; fight to a finish. Among actors who affected to be lackadaisical, as a kind of outward sign of intellectuality, Fanny Brough upset the atmosphere with the *élan* of a stormy petrel, and when she had succeeded, she made it plain enough that she had not only individual energy, but brain-power. Her Mrs. Egerton Bompas in Pinero's " Times " and her hostess in " The Man from Blankley's " will always rank as masterpieces of English comedy. But she was not only a comedienne. Labelled as actors often are under our system, it was her misfortune, not her fault, that during the latter part of her career she was never allowed to appear in characters of emotional range. For she commanded the tear as well as the guffaw. I see her now as the Mother of " Little Lord Fauntleroy," a touching picture of struggling suffering motherhood.

With her disappears an actress who had a definite place in our theatre. We used to say, " It is a Fanny-Brough part." And there is a world of meaning in this combination. It is a hall-mark of individuality.

JANET ACHURCH.

To the present generation merely an honoured name, she was at one time one of the foremost actresses in the English-speaking world and dauntless pioneer of the intellectual drama. At first her progress to fame was but slow. Graced with beauty, she was so full of mannerisms, her ennunciation was so peculiarly *precieux*, that she commanded interest but rarely enthusiasm. Her personality was more distinguished than magnetic, but in her surroundings great things were predicted for her.

In the late 'eighties, when William Archer by his translations introduced Ibsen to the British public, Janet Achurch and her husband, Charles Charrington, were not slow to perceive the coming of a new era. Boldly they plunged into management at the Little Novelty (now Kingsway Theatre), more boldly even she assumed the part of Nora in " The Doll's House "—a character of immense complexity, demanding versatility, intensity, humour and emotional power.

Her creation raised a storm of controversy and by storm she conquered our artistic world. Such transitions from the *insouciant* to the true dramatic, such sincerity, naturalness, and everyday simplicity of manner had never been seen on the London stage. The play was hotly attacked and violently defended, but for the actress there was but unison of acclamation. A great thing had been realised—greater things dawned on the horizon.

But Janet Achurch never surpassed that first grandiose portrayal. She approached it in " Little Eyolf," and in Shaw's " Captain Brassbound." But the battle of life, long tours to Australia and the new world, management ventures ambitiously planned but marred by financial considerations, hampered the steady development of her genius. Only once again in the many years between the 'eighties and her untimely death did she rise to the fulness of her promise ; that was in 1911, when at the Court Theatre she created " The Witch " in the weird Scandinavian play of that name. A tragedienne ! we exclaimed, deeply moved by her diction and the fateful eeriness of her performance.

Yes, a tragedienne, but not on the stage only, in life too. Illness was already undermining her vitality ; her appearance became more and more intermittent ; she aged fast beyond her years ; the last time we saw her, in Eden Phillpott's play, " The Secret Woman," she was a venerable and pathetic figure, her words were almost inaudible, yet such were her mimic powers that her gesture became as eloquent as oratory. It was a triumph of tragic force over human tragedy.

JIMMY WELCH.

It was in '93, The Independent Theatre, buoyant in the conquest of G. B. Shaw's first play, was rehearsing " Widower's Houses," the cast was complete except Lickcheese, that dry, pathetic starveling, who eked out a miserable living as rent-collector. Somehow we were in despair to find the right man, when, as by magic, a spare, fair, demure little man with an impressive head on diminutive body peeped into the rehearsal room, and the producer, H. de Lange, exclaimed, " Lickcheese to the life ! " So James Welch was forthwith engaged, and on the first night he became renowned. The public felt at once the arrival of a new histrionic power—a talent, rich in humour, and equally full of pathos. His Lickcheese was the incarnation of the tragic-comic. In his heart of hearts " Jimmy "—a pet name of all the world—preferred serious plays ; hence his perennial devotion to Parker's " Man in the Street "—a creation that will live ; indeed, he once told me that, but for financial considerations, " Hamlet " would have been the height of his ambition.

The charm of Welch's gift lay in the strange duality of his person. No sooner did he enter than he created an atmosphere all his own. If he intended to be comic, the wave of his hair, the twinkle of his eye, the ubiquity of his arms and limbs, the curve of his lips when firing off the lines that meant to tell, the cosiness radiating from his being kindled his sense of humour. The audience would start laughing, with and at him, and carry away a collection of cartoons of a comedian in a whirligig of comic storm and stress. " When Knights were Bold " has become an English Don Quixote in miniature. But when Welch played a serious part of inwardness, that self-same mirth-provoking personality changed into a pathetic figure. His very smallness made for sympathy ; his head commanded dignity, his features expressed strife and anguish in such lines and furrows as revealed intense feeling, and his voice could break so woefully that one felt as if it clamoured for strong arms to defend this little man against the wicked world.

E. S. WILLARD.

To the older playgoer a memory, to the young generation merely a name, E. S. Willard, died in mental darkness, almost in oblivion. His eclipse was as sudden as his rise to fame. He was literally " made " in one night. Henry Arthur Jones, Wilson Barrett, and E. S. Willard became the talk of London in 1882, when " The Silver King " was produced at the old Princess's Theatre. He made the " Spider's " name a kind of minor classic ; it was the regeneration of the stage villian—a human monster hitherto, Willard portrayed him as a gentleman of immaculate shirt-front and manner, with the then " swaggering " cigarette see-sawing between his lips and nefarious deeds. After that came, again under the aegis of Jones, " The Middleman," perhaps his *magnum opus*, the workman as he really was, forceful, yet subdued by capital, until he was roused to rebellion and self-estimation. Both play and actor made an immense impression. Looking backward they were symptomatic of the gigantic evolution of the labour movement in this country.

After " The Middleman " came " Judah "—also by Henry Arthur Jones—a mystic figure of charlatanism and super-manity scarcely understood, yet applauded by the man in the street, but of significance only to the few who had heard of and read Nietzsche. To this day it remains a riddle why Willard, after his years of success in America, did not revive these plays on his return to London. His last and lasting success in England was " The Professor's Love-Story," that sweet idyll by J. M. Barrie, in which Willard with great charm and far more subtlety than he ever showed before created the character of the middle-aged purblind professor who, in the aloofness of his scientific world, scarce perceived the little girl by his side gently weaving romance around his heart.

Willard was a self-made actor, a self-made man. That accounts for the general aspect of his work. He was above all of the stage. He knew technique, its value, all its ramifications ; endowed with a fine voice, he

also knew that diction is the chief controller of dramatic effect. In days when many deliveries on our stage were slipshod and ranting, he chased every word into its proper form. He was convincing. For all that I think that he was more an actor of intuition than of intellect, for his incursions into Shakespeare conjure up reminiscences of indifferent achievements. Indeed it has been said that the criticisms of his " Macbeth " were such as to herald his giving London the cold shoulder. He had aspirations of classical genius; perhaps—who knows—he hoped to vie with Irving and to take his place.

A tour to America led to a prolonged stay in the States. When he came back to London he made no effort to reconquer his place and when he was approached to play he would claim the lion's share among the parts or nothing. So he became a relic, still courted by old friends and revered by the playgoers of his time when he showed himself in public, yet unsought by the Managers. It was pathetic to see him at first nights, a splendid figure with a mane of white hair on a powerful head, yet with eyes full of sadness and solitude, the eyes of a man who realises that time has marched on and left him behind.

VIOLET CAMERON.

A Memoirette.

There was a time, midway in the eighties, when on every wordly young man's mantelpiece there stood three photographs, Mrs. Langtry—the Lily; Maud Branscombe—the Juno; and Violet Cameron—image of Diana. Violet Cameron had a radiant personality. Her figure was flawless, her step distinguished, her Grecian features were sculptural, there glittered a quaint light in her eyes, grey eyes I think, with a glint of steel, and when she sang the house was full of tone.

She never warmed her audience, for her temperament was but lukewarm, she impressed them. Indeed, she was in those days, when the word star had neither arisen nor lost its lustre, the typical Queen of operette. In the "Cloches de Corneville" or "Favart," in many of of those famous operettes of real character and real music, she bewitched all London. I say bewitched designedly, for she was one of those actresses, who spellbound the masses and impelled the more critical playgoer to bow to her beauty whilst she was on the stage, but to take exceptions as soon as the play was over.

For she was not what one professionally calls a real actress; nor, in spite of her vocal powers, and her excellent tuition, was she a real singer. Hers was the talent of the will o' the wisp in magnificent glamour. Thus she vanished from the public gaze as she had coruscated in it, and with her went the vogue of her portraits. But the older generation that loves to dwell on past glories has kept her memory green. "Violet Cameron, my boy, in the 'Cloches' and 'Favart,' what a beauty, what carriage, what a voice—talk of to-day and"—and then the greybeard will go into raptures, living his young life over again, when he was a "buck" and every Queen of his heart, a queen for ever and a day.

GEORGE EDWARDES.

In his sphere he was a master-mind. Better than the public themselves he knew what the public wanted. When he saw that the exquisite school of Gilbert-Sullivan created no disciples, that the operetta, mainly owing to the poverty of the libretti, was temporarily effete, he created a new school—musical comedy.

Whatever its position in art, whatever its degeneration due to excessive prosperity and reckless imitation, there is no gainsaying that musical comedy, with its freedom of text, its tuneful lightness of airs, its frivolity of gaiety rustling through orchestration as well as skirts, its beauty feminine and its beauty of colour-scheme, has for years been the main source of gaiety of the theatre-goers of the nation. " People want to be amused after the day's work, they don't want to think," he once said very affably to me, discussing as unfavourable criticism of the Gaiety. " I do all the thinking for them." And then followed, midst clouds of smoke from a long cigar, an eloquent defence of his system. He stood up for his producers, his librettists, and his composers, he dangled before my eyes the scenic charm of " The Geisha," and " San Toy " and, with a sigh, of the " Greek Slave," and then he wound up with the obiter dictum, " Musical Comedy makes artists." And that will, perhaps be the greatest thing in his record.

He was an ingenious producer; to achieve beauty his exchequer knew no limit, nor was a price too high for the scene or artists he wanted. But in all these matters he had rivals of equal power and generosity in other venues of the theatre, although in musical comedy he was the undisputed ruler. But there is no injustice in saying that no manager has discovered in the literal sense of the word so much talent, has (via musical comedy) enriched the theatre with so many real comedians (both men and women) except F. R. Benson.

Edwardes had not only the instinct of the stage, of the inclinations of the public, of the title that would attract and the melody that would enliven homes and thoroughfares; he had above all the instinct of personality. When he made up his mind that in the phalanx there was one destined to fame, he would pick her or him out and boldly promote them to the front rank, and nearly always his deafness to protest and doubt was a feather in his cap. Under his sway the Gaiety and Daly's became a fountain-head of reputations. It was this unbounded self-confidence, this "I am I" assertiveness, which secured for Edwardes a place of distinction in our histrionic history. To which should be added that under a certain ruggedness of manner and address, an elusiveness to the importuning, a simulated *insouciance* to all kinds of detail, there ruled the firm grip of the business-like head, the broad view of the complete man of the world with a kind and bountiful hand.

PAUL RUBENS.

" Paul " for short, for he was well-beloved by everybody. I remember my first meeting him, precisely thirty-two years ago, when he was ten and looked upon as a kind of child-prodigy. He and his brother Walter, as fair as Paul was dark, were playmates of my cousin, the late Fred Henlé, that remarkable young barrister, who was carried away in sight of Parliament and silk, and on Sundays there were great doings at the piano. The two boys were then already complete society entertainers; they strummed and they declaimed, they wrote verses off their own bat, and, beholding them, the whisper went round—coming composers. And no wonder that it should have been so, for the Rubens' house was a musical salon and Paul's delightful mother in her maiden days was a renowned pianist.

As time wore on, Paul became a junior edition of Corney Grain. What the incomparable " Max " was at the dinner-table, Paul was at the soirée. No social entertainment was complete without Paul at the piano. Then he began to write songs, to dabble in play-writing, to make for publicity. And he, keenly perceptive of the trend of taste, became a devotee, afterwards almost a dictator, of musical comedy under the generous wing of George Edwardes. Had he studied longer and more profoundly he would have become one of the greatest composers of England; as it was—for he wrote for the piano and left scoring to others—he was content to be its tuneful troubadour.

Many of his works—" Three Little Maids," " Miss Hook of Holland," latterly " Betty," to choose but a trio from a big bunch—started from London all round the world. Many of his songs are to be found on the piano in every music-loving household. For he was, as he once called it himself, all tune and jingle and turned out plot and verse with such facility that he often elected to be his own librettist, instead of seeking collaboration.

Of his compositions, such as—" She was a Miller's Daughter "—some will remain evergreen and be recorded as typical of our light music of to-day. To the war he contributed a recruiting song which, whatever its inspiration from the musician's point of view, was looked upon by the Tommies as the next best thing to " Tipperary " and " Keep the Home Fires Burning." Undoubtedly " We don't want to lose you " has done much to swell the ranks as several proclamations.

Charming in nature, liberal at heart, modest to a fault, Paul Rubens was cherished even by those, who felt that the taste of the public and his phenomenal popularity marred his devoting his great talent to composition of inwardness and quality. Still, whatever the real merits of his work, he leaves a great void. For his was the divine gift of adding to the gaiety of the nation.

LOUIS MEYER.

I remember a journey from Calais—when there were no clouds and Zeppelins on the horizon. Louis Meyer and José Levy were fellow-travellers and we chatted. As a rule a long talk in a railway carriage saps the life-force out of me, but that little conference with Louis Meyer, first on the boat and then in a snug corner of the Pullman, is a pleasant souvenir. Three main qualities fascinated me in the man—his flamboyant joy of living, his unquenchable enterprise, his versatile knowledge. He spoke of life and London as an everlasting source of pleasure—he loved the light side as well as the night side. He was a boy at forty. As for work he looked upon it as play ; he had two theatres at the time, to say nothing of his connection with *London Opinion*, the Curio Club, and sundry little odds and ends of business at which he hinted with sphinx-like reticence. His pockets were full of plays. He said : " I do not necessarily buy Boulevard successes for everybody runs after them. I watch what is going on in Paris and let things simmer, then I pick up a *demi-succès* that seems likely for London, well," and he winked—it was his way of explaining the success of " The Glad Eye." We then talked plays with a vengeance, and I found that he has read or seen everything ; we talked books, and whether French or English he knew all about the best ; we talked art and he told me of his early efforts as an illustration ; we talked finance and he proved to be as well acquainted with stocks and shares as with theatrical syndicates. He was, in fact, an all-round man *par excellence*, and one with a wonderful instinct of what the public wants. His co-operation with Mr. Bourchier in " The Glad Eye " ; his belief and wonderful luck in " Mr. Wu " ; his revival of " The Silver King "—curtailed like so many other productions by the stagnation due to the sudden war—they all proved his equipment for the managerial task. As he progressed it was his ambition to apply his own gifts to the theatre—it meant yet more success, more work, more tax on his frail constitution. At last he had to give in and surrender ; he leaves behind him many friends, much unfulfilled promise, and a veteran's record achieved in a mere two score of years.

W. H. KENDAL.

His was the lesser place in the sun, for Mrs. Kendal was—and is—one of the greatest actresses of our theatre. But he played his obbliggato with the exquisite grace of that perfect English gentleman which he was on the stage and off. Indeed, to characterise Mr. Kendal thus is to assign to him his right place in the artistic world. In personality, in method, in voice, he belonged essentially to the type of man who midway in the last century, was held up as a model of manliness, correctness, taste, with restraint to dome it all as something to inspire respect and admiration. In saying this, there is no belittling of Mr. Kendal's work—nor a denial of humour. In "The Iron Master" and his fine reading of Aubrey Tanqueray, his inward power overwhelmed his statuesque impassivity, and later, in "The Elder Miss Blossom" and "The Housekeeper"—two plays with which the Kendals for years criss-crossed the country from Land's End to John o' Groats—he displayed that dry yet fruity sense of the comical, which never fails to make the Briton's heart jump with joy.

Mr. Kendal had his hey-days when, with his accomplished wife and Sir John Hare, he made theatrical history at the St. James's Theatre. And great was the regret that in later years the Kendals became such strangers to the West End of London. But, wherever they were, to them never applied the bitter adage "Out of sight out of mind." And thus Mr. Kendal will always be remembered as a splendid working partner in a world-famed firm.

"BERNIE."

"Bernie" to those of her charmed circle, but to the public always Mrs. Bernard Beere. For, however delightfully simple she was in privare life, on the stage she was a *grande dame*, a queenly figure, imposing, never to be forgotten. That personality accounts for the rare fact that, although she had not acted in London for some twenty years, her name was as familiar to the young generation of playgoers as to the older one.

Mrs. Bernard Beere, like Bernhardt, like Réjane, like Jane Harding and Granier, possessed that strange, arresting power which I would define in the word "universality." In her person she crystallised the theatre and the salon. No mannequin could wear and display a gown as she; wherever she entered there was by manner, gesture, address the atmosphere of "somebody"—somebody out of the common overshadowing all around her.

Undoubtedly she had the gift of assimilation; in her humble days on the staff in the front of the house at one of the theatres she must have studied the greatest, and not without cause was she called the English Bernhardt when she drew all London to admire her Lena Despard, her Fedora, and much later, her "Woman of No Importance." There was the grand *allure* and the initial reserve to husband her forces for a lurid effusion. Once seen in a great character the vision never faded, and after all these years we materialise her Lena in "As in a Looking-Glass"—the plot has long faded from memory, the heroine survives; we see the scene of anguish in the third act of "Fedora"; we hear the last words of Wilde's play—"Who is he?" "A man of no importance"—flung across the stage with infinite scorn yet with an undercurrent of pathos full of remembrance.

Was she a great actress in the general sense of the word? The answer must remain in the balance, since her development was physically marred in the heyday of her womanhood. But she was certainly a great figure, and in her progress from 1883 to 1891 she had no equal in *comédie de salon*, which was then the generic term for the school of Sardou and Dumas the younger.

Her later life was a constant struggle between mind and matter. Hope lived eternal in her ambitious, active soul. Year after year she used to send me a little line to remind me of her birthday and to announce that she was gaining strength, that she meant yet to do great things, that she would soon begin again. But every year brought merely an unfulfilled promise, and when she was seen at the theatre, among spectators, also once upon the stage, she was merely a shadow of her former majestic self, grateful in the recognition that in her case retirement did not mean oblivion.

"THE COLONEL."

(LIEUT.-COLONEL NEWHAM-DAVIS).

A fine figure of a man in every sense of the world, and a perfect man of many worlds to boot. As a soldier he earned distinction; as a gastronomer, he was known to fame; as a *litérateur*, he had the touch that appealed to the *gourmand*; as a conversationalist, he had the old-world charm of the intense listener and the unostentatious talker versed in a thousand and one subjects; best of all, as a guide, philosopher, and friend he was a standard dictionary to all his journalistic colleagues. When in doubt as to etiquette and form, when in dilemma in knotty questions, such as cross the critics' career, we used to say, "ask the Colonel," and the Colonel with that delicate tact born of experience of all sorts and conditions of men, always pointed in the right direction.

His universality brought him into touch with Bohemian journalism, for as a raconteur he was second to none, but even in Bohemia he never forgot his simple dignity of a born *grand seigneur*. His was the congeniality of innate distinction. Nor should it be forgotten that this denizen of two cities, as much at home on the Boulevard as in Bond Street, was something more than a *dilettante* in the world of art. He has written about the dinner-table as if it were a realm of romance; he has written about soldiers, which showed how well he knew his Tommies and his peers; he has written novels, plays, verse, criticisms, as full of observation as of indulgence; he has written a ballet, "A Day in Paris," that made us feel in the Empire as if we were week-ending 'twixt Café de la Paix and Champs Elysées.

In sum, he was in his quiet way, a high priest of the greatest art of all—the art of making life worth living.

CAPTAIN SYDNEY BROOKFIELD.

He represents dramatic criticism on the Roll of Honour, and he was one of the youngest, keenest, best.

In our little army of defenders of the theatre, he began as a " Tommy." For some considerable time he wrote reviews of amateur performances in the *Referee*, and so well done was his work that with one fell swoop he rose to the appointment of dramatic critic of the *Daily Mail*. It was his Capitol and his Tarpeian Rock. After a few months he found himself a free-lance once more ; he had learned that " those in high places stand on windy planes." His work was excellent in its freedom and breeziness, but, evidently, it was not considered to suit the million. So he returned to his first love, the *Referee*, and there as Pellinore, he became a brilliant member of the Carados conclave.

For one so young—he was mid-twenty—he displayed an acute insight into human nature, a fine *flaire* of the theatre, a sure and sane judgment expressed with freshness and pleasing confidence. To behold him in the theatre was to enjoy the presence of a young man full of ardour and of love for his calling, delightful in his youthful alertness, ubiquitous in his restless search for discussion and argument. We all looked upon him as a coming man and he literally basked in the sunshine of his universal popularity.

Then the war broke out ; he was, despite delicate constitution and weak eyes, among the first to seek a commission and to join the colours. Before he left, his colleagues gave him a rousing send-off at Romano's, and as he spoke in response to the encomiums of Lieut.-Colonel Newham-Davis, who presided, of Mr. Walkley, of many others, including Mr. S. R. Littlewood, who, as Agravaine, became his worthy successor on the *Referee*, there was a joyful note of optimism in his words. He spoke of his love for his work, of his duty to the country, of his aspirations after the war. It was a mirthful parting, full of hope unclouded by ominous forebodings. Alas ! that it proved a *morituru te salutat.*

G. A. REDFORD.

The Censor he became more by chance than by choice—at any rate, his own choice. He was, if I remember well, a bank manager at Holborn and an intimate friend of the Reader of Plays, Mr. Piggott, that Victorian official *par excellence*, who, when I discussed with him the double standard of morality as to English and French plays, said : " You see, young friend, when a London theatre produces a French play I look upon it as French territory for the time being and judge accordingly." There was a world of significance in that. When Mr. Piggott died, theatreland was astonished and not a little perturbed that a man of figures instead of a man of letters should have become our *Censor morum*. But he wielded his office with tact, discretion, and the silence of a sage. Whenever there was an upheaval of protest against his rule, he said nothing or he temporised.

Policy not polemics was his motto and well do I remember an incident which showed me the inner man as well as the official. There had been produced a foreign play with which I was connected. He had licensed it, but he had not really understood it, for his accomplished wife, who survives him was his Egeria in foreign affairs. Somehow the play created comment, and mothers wrote to the St. James's Palace that it was not quite the thing for their daughters (although it was a pure work of art). So he asked to see the promoters, and he said : " In the face of this opposition I might as the Censor prohibit the performance, but I would not care to mar foreign art in England, and I would ask you whether it would not be possible to tone down a certain scene." When this was promised he declared himself satisfied in a most affable manner and the play had an unprecedented run.

Of course, Mr. Redford, like any Under-Secretary of State, had often to bear the brunt of charges against his superiors, and he was much criticised at the time for refusing the licence to " Monna Vanna " (which I conquered just before the war, under the liberal régime of Mr. Ernest Bendall and Mr. G. S. Street) because of the famous line, *nue sous son manteau*. I know for a fact that he had nothing to do with this refusal—he was directed to withhold the licence because the ethics of the play were misunderstood.

EVELYN D'ALROY.

Indeed those gods, of whom the poet speaks, loved her. They gave her beauty, charm, talent, success, and a devoted partner Malcolm Watson, whose sorrow goes near to our heart.

To me Evelyn D'Alroy was the picture of the Shepherdesses immortalised by Watteau. She was all grace and delicacy; yet frail to behold, there glowed in her the promise of eternal power. Once, and only once in her all too brief career, had she the opportunity to give herself entirely. It was at the Criterion in a play called "The Builders," by Nora Keith. In that brief spell of a matinée we saw the actress and came away with great expectations. Good work she had done in plenty, in "The Sign of the Cross," in Drury Lane, at His Majesty's, in the revival of "Tyranny of Tears," in light music, when she made the most of a small but melodious voice. But she was carried away before her many gifts grew to full ripeness, and with her went the hope and ambition of things to come and a personality that courted nothing but sympathy of all the world around her.

GABY DESLYS.

Why do I write about her. She was not an artist, not an actress, not a dancer ; although she endeavoured to be all three. And, at least, one thing lay at her charge ; she was responsible for the fate of a king and allowed his love-lorn vapourings of immature youth to be published in the press of Paris. To my mind, there is no condonation for such indiscretion except one—perhaps the supreme of all—that she was a worker, that she rose from the lower depth, that she understood that in the world of humbug, snobbism, window-dressing (with the fewest probing the underlying sorrow of it all) to be somebody. So she was somebody. At first, when she had risen from nowhere to a George Edwardes' chorus ; anon by fashion, plumed hats and other audacities, to terpsichorean efforts—much applauded. Onward still by a *réclame* and incidental sensations, beyond all the usual Press-Agent's wiles extant. Her dances with Pilcer, her severance from Pilcer, his alliance with the much more talented Teddie Gerard, her manifesto—blessing to the twain—blazoned out in all papers to the open-mouthed crowd and the guffaws of the artistic community, were things for remembrance. They abashed all the impressarios of a gullible public.

That was one Gaby Deslys.

Then, all of a sudden, she had aspirations beyond her hats, beyond her pearls, beyond the description of her bedchamber in Kensington Square.

She desired to achieve real histrionic fame. And she nearly achieved it. One no less than Sir James Barrie wrote a revue for her. It was called " Rosy Rapture," and Hermann Darewski composed excellent music of the revue-pattern for it. True, when it—I mean the music—became common property and the records, of which I have a sheaf, were in every dancing room, Gaby was but seemingly the singer. The records were recorded by Gertrude Lang—she who made the hit of the Revue—and scored her credit second-hand. That was Gaby all over. I reap and you sow. But she worked like a Trojan as Rosy—she charmed us by her song " Petit Chocolat " ; one then felt that she had her heart in the right place, despite the story of the Portuguese Crown—and it was not her fault that a great author failed to pour his genius into the small yet difficult quarts of mere Revue.

She had other aspirations ; she wanted to play leading parts at the French Players—and she talked to me about it—*ça vaut toujours un entrefilet.*

She wanted to be associated with Sir George Alexander, when he played a sketch at Liverpool, and nothing was more stimulating than the pursuit of the one and the urbane dodging of the other.

Once she had a theatre of her own in London, and some nice persons threw pennies on the stage at the head of her partner, Harry Pilcer.

Still she pursued, and she would have arrived, but for her predominant passion to let fashion overhelm her earnest endeavours to make something of her career. Here was the fate of the Raven in Lafontaine's fable, generous to a fault, as she should be, she listened to no counsellors, except the flatterers and the sharks ever in quest of " mugs " in the world of the theatre.

A Marseillaise, she had all the spirit, vim and Roumestanism of her descent. But she lacked the main equipment of a real artist—the inspiration which blossoms in silence. Thus she remained what Heine called an artist of life—the joy of living was her finest conception of fine art. And the gods loved her. They carried her off before the world paused to enquire into her age.

CHARLES HADDON CHAMBERS.

In Remembrance.

His was the ideal exit of a dramatist—sudden, swift, gentle. He will be sorely missed in Theatreland, in Bohemia, in the ranks of our playwrights. Favoured by nature in many ways, his greatest dower was his triumph in middle age ; for brilliant as were " Captain Swift." " The Idler," and that delectable morsel, " The Tyranny of Tears," they were, after a brief and strange spell of sterility and failure, overshadowed by the splended work of his fifties, " The Passers-by," which will outlive them all; and " The Saving Grace," that perfect blend of humour and pathos which revealed the author's heart as well as his art. Chambers, without belonging to any definite school, may be called the romantic-realist of our drama. He saw life steadily and whole through kindly spectacles, and, like the title of his most lovable play, his was the Saving Grace to sweeten the hard facts of existence with a fascinating touch of imagination.

LADY BANCROFT.

It was just my luck that I arrived in London in 1885, when the Bancrofts officially ended their reign of glory and bade farewell to the World of the Theatre. To be candid, I had not come to these shores with high ideas of the state in Shakespeare's land. Abroad the British stage was frankly laughed at: "No plays at all (except "Caste" and "Our Boys"), bad acting, ranting, pantomime." How well I remember these ignorant gibes in days when travelling was the exception rather than the rule. But I soon found out that the theatre of England was not as black as it was painted, that it was in a transition period, that it was a case of "Barkis is willing" as far as the public was concerned, and inefficiency of most managers (have we changed all that?). When I had seen the Bancrofts, Irving, Hare, the Kendals, Wilson Barrett, I became a wiser and a better-informed man, and never shall I forget that evening at the Haymarket, when the Bancrofts took leave, to plant their cabbages and write their Memoirs, amidst thunders, shrieks and tears; then I felt they were great: she great in comedy mingled with pathos, he great as that beau ideal of manhood—an English gentleman—which he still is on the stage and off, and long may he be spared. Alas that the crown of his eighties, but conferred a few days ago in sunshine and showers of congratulations, is dimmed by her sudden departure. It came as a shock for she was a landmark—a milestone in our dramatic world. Of her one thought as of him and Sir John Hare, as perennials. Well, she is gone, and she will ever be remembered as an artist whose smile worked wonders, whose words electrified, whose characterisations are indelible. When, in the nineties, for once she could not resist the temptations of the stage, and, at the Garrick, told us the tale of the cock-a-doodle in Sardou's "Peril," there rustled through the audience a feeling of indescribable enjoyment. For this great actress was in cosy form the incarnation of that priceless British possession—a sense of humour. Smiles were hers to command, and to listen to her was the caress of harps in the air!

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